

## LATIN AND THE COMPARATIVE RECONSTRUCTION OF QU-EXCLAMATIVES

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**ABSTRACT** While there are many synchronic studies on exclamatives, diachronic studies into the origin and development of exclamatives are rare. In this paper, I study the Latin evidence in order to arrive at a method for investigating the historical development of a subset of exclamatives, viz. exclamatives headed by interrogatives (QU-). I propose a classification of these exclamatives which takes into account their syntactic behaviour and their semantics. The specific distributional patterns found in Latin support existing etymological insights and allow for a few typological generalizations.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Exclamatives are often expressed by words or syntactic constructions that also have other functions in the language such as interrogatives and relatives. Sometimes, the form of an exclamative construction (slightly) differs from that of the non-exclamative one, as in the case of French *comment?* ‘how?’ versus *comme!* ‘how!’ discussed further below. Such differences call for an explanation and hence for a diachronic investigation.

This paper provides an overview of the Latin QU-exclamatives, their distribution in the corpus of Latin texts from Antiquity, and their etymology. It aims to contribute to the historical syntax of exclamatives by proposing a syntactic and semantic classification of QU-exclamatives that may serve as a model for investigating exclamatives in other – in particular, Indo-European – languages, and by showing that the language-internal distribution of different QU-markers holds clues to the history of the language. The focus of this paper on QU-exclamatives is motivated by the fact that this formational type is one of the most common types cross-linguistically, and by some interesting changes that happened within the period of literary attestation of Latin.

There appears to be no universal agreement on the terminology involved in exclamatory phenomena in linguistics. I start by adopting the distinction

that is usually made between exclamations and exclamatives. The term *exclamation* refers to any phrase marked by exclamative intonation or, in writing, by an exclamation mark at the end of the phrase, as in *Watch out!* or *You're late!* The term *exclamative* has established itself for a subset of all exclamations, viz. utterances with an explicit or implicit evaluation of the scale or degree of a proposition, which are therefore also termed degree exclamations (Michaelis 2001: 1038, Marandin 2010: 36). The evaluation implied by exclamatives may be positive or negative (Brugmann 1925: 193), compare the two possible readings of English phrases such as *What a book!* or *What a friend you are!*

Michaelis (2001) offers a general typological introduction to exclamatives, summarizing the earlier literature. She holds that exclamatives differ from affirmatives by not affirming a proposition but rather presenting it as a topic that is already known to the participants (Michaelis 2001: 1039). The new information contained in the exclamative is the evaluation of the degree of some scalar property manifested in the denoted situation as being out of the ordinary or unexpected. In most cases, this evaluation is a scalar one, and the hearer is expected to infer the relevant scale from the context (Michaelis 2001: 1040, Marandin 2010: 37).

The frequent lexical coincidence of exclamatives and (a subset of) information interrogatives, as in English *How nice!* and *What a storm!* is explained by Lambrecht & Michaelis (1998) from their identical background conditions: both phrase types require placing the entity enquired about on a mutually known scale. By asking *How much did you spend?* the speaker seeks to know where on a numerical scale to situate a given expense. By exclaiming *How much you have spent!* the speaker affirms that the expense is placed relatively high on that same scale (Michaelis 2001: 1047).

The present contribution consists of three main parts. Section 2 provides a typological survey of the different strategies to mark exclamatives that can be found in Indo-European languages. This may serve as a guideline for similar research in languages other than Latin. Section 3 zooms in on Latin QU-exclamatives, providing a classification based on syntax and semantics that is illustrated with a number of text examples and followed by an etymological discussion of the different QU-markers found in Latin. Section 4 analyzes the attested distribution and identifies a few distributional gaps which I propose to explain with the help of the different origins of the QU-markers.

## 2 EXCLAMATIVE MARKING

Languages mark exclamatives in different ways, and there are several methods to classify these markings (Michaelis 2001: 1042–49). For a survey of

strategies in French, see [Marandin \(2010\)](#). For Latin, [Pinkster \(2015: 361–68\)](#) provides the most recent survey of exclamative constructions, which he terms ‘exclamatory sentences’. For Ancient Greek, see [Faure \(2012\)](#) and [Biraud, Denizot & Faure \(2021\)](#). Based on these and other Indo-European languages, I distinguish the following major strategies to encode exclamative meanings.

### 2.1 *Anaphoric marking*

The predicate is modified by an anaphoric adverb or adnominal, as in English *So nice!* or *Such a mess!* ([Michaelis 2001: 1044–45](#)). These anaphorics always indicate a degree on a scale, such as degree, frequency, manner, quality, and quantity. Deictics referring to a non-scalar category, such as ‘this, that’, ‘yon’, ‘here’, ‘then’, ‘therefore’ cannot be used.

### 2.2 *Interrogative marking*

The exclamative may be headed by adverbial or adnominal interrogatives and/or relatives that introduce information questions, as in English *How he’s grown!* or *What a mess!* Such items are often subsumed under the heading WH-items (for English) or QU-items (for Latin), but note that in English and Latin, these items can be both interrogative and relative, whereas other languages may formally differentiate these categories. In Ancient Greek ([Faure 2012](#)), interrogative *pōs* ‘how?’ differs from relative *hōs* ‘how’, with the exclamative *hōs!* converging with the latter. In Sanskrit, interrogative *kā-* ‘who, what?’ differs from relative *yā-* ‘which’, but here the exclamative *kā-* uses the interrogative stem.

Again in both English and Latin, only interrogatives that allow for a scalar answer, such as ‘how?’, ‘what kind of?’, and ‘how many?’ can be used in exclamatives, whereas interrogatives demanding a non-scalar answer, such as ‘who?’, ‘which?’, ‘where?’, ‘when?’, ‘why?’, are not usually employed ([Rett 2011: 417](#)). Other languages, such as Dutch and German, do allow non-scalar interrogatives to head exclamatives, but only if the focus lies on the unexpectedness of the event rather than on the individual QU-referent ([Nouwen & Chernilovskaya 2014](#)), as in German *Wen ich heute (alles) getroffen habe!* ‘[Imagine] (all) the people I’ve met today!’ or *Wen ich heute (wieder) getroffen habe!* ‘[Guess] whom I’ve met (again) today!’. Here the subject pronoun, the temporal adverb and the main verb may carry phrasal stress, but not the interrogative *wen*.

A good example of the implications of the typological generalization that exclamatives are rarely headed by non-scalar interrogatives is the following. In ancient Indo-Iranian languages such as Sanskrit and Avestan, the adnom-

inal QU-interrogative and exclamative *ka-* ‘which?’ can also be prefixed to a noun or adjective to form a pejorative compound, as in Skt. *ka-pūya-* ‘stinking awfully’, *kat-payá-* ‘swelling horribly’, and Avestan *ka-mərəða* ‘head’ (of demonic creatures) (Thumb & Hauschild 1959: 409–10, Remmer 2012). These compounds represent the occasional lexicalization of exclamative expressions, e.g., *\*kas \*pūyas!* ‘What a stinker’. Indo-Iranian pejorative compounds may also be headed by *kú* which synchronically means ‘where?’: Skt. *kú-yava-* ‘who brings crop failure’ (attested in the Rigveda and the Vājasaneyi-Samhitā; *yava-* ‘crop’), *kú-manas-* ‘ill-minded’ (Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā; *mānas-* ‘mind’), *ku-cará-* ‘sneaking around’ (Rigveda; *cára-* ‘go round’), *á-kū-pāra-* ‘not having a border anywhere’ (Rigveda, Vājasaneyi-Samhitā+), Av. *kū-nāirī-* ‘bad woman, whore’ (Videvdad; to *\*nāirī-* ‘woman’). However, an initial meaning *\*ku \*nāirī* ‘Where’s the woman!’ seems improbable in view of the general rarity of exclamatives headed by ‘where’. This suggests that *ku* may have had a different meaning in these compounds, and this is confirmed by the Sanskrit particle *kuvid* ‘how now?!’ from *kú* ‘how’ and *id* ‘this’ (EWAia I: 359, 378). Therefore the pejoratives go back to exclamatives such as *\*ku \*carati!* ‘How he runs around!’, *\*ku \*nāirī* ‘How the woman (behaves)!’ Chronologically, the semantic change of PIE *\*k<sup>w</sup>u* > Iir. *\*ku* ‘where’ to Iir. ‘where; how’ must have preceded the rise of the pejorative compounds in *ku-*. As we will see below, Latin *ut* displays a similar historical development.

### 2.3 Free noun phrases

A different type of exclamatives consists of free noun phrases, as in English *The mess (they’ve made)!* (Michaelis 2001: 1048–49). This type is formally expressed by the omission of an embedding clause, though the latter may be additionally marked depending on the language. In Latin, the noun phrase may consist of a noun, pronoun, or evaluative adjective in the accusative (Hofmann & Szantyr 1972: 48, Vairel-Carron 1975: 15–181, Pinkster 2015: 363–65), as in *O audaciam!* ‘The impudence!’ (Terence, *Phormio* 360), *Mortalis malos!* ‘What sly mortals!’ (Plautus, *Poenulus* 653), *Me miseram!* ‘Dear me!’ (Plautus, *Amphitruo* 1056). Ancient Greek has occasional instances of an exclamative genitive, which is interpreted by Biraud et al. (2021: 232–57) as a predicate consisting of a partitive genitive.

Such free noun phrases may be regarded as truncated full phrases, as is tentatively done by Pinkster following other authors, although it remains problematic that there is no way to decide which kind of embedding clause must be posited for the ‘underlying’ full phrase.

#### 2.4 Free subordinates

Free subordinate clauses or insubordinates are also found with exclamative meaning. Examples from English include unembedded *that*-clauses, e.g., *That he should have left without asking me!* (Evans 2007: 400) and main clause infinitives, e.g., *To think that I was once a millionaire!* (Evans 2007: 401). In Latin, the exclamative accusative-plus-infinitive belongs to this type, e.g. *Perii. Numquamne etiam me illam vidisse!* 'Damn it. To think that I have never seen her!' (Terence, *Eunuchus* 360), cf. Pinkster (2015: 365) and the collection of examples in Flickinger (Flickinger 1908, 1913, 1918) and Flickinger & Murley (1923). The same questions as to the hypothetical origin of these truncated phrases apply as in the previous section.

#### 2.5 Intersubjectivity

All of the preceding four types are open to an interpretation as a free or insubordinate subclause, since they can be paraphrased by a longer expression in which the exclamative is introduced by an epistemic stance verb:

- (1) (It's) So nice!
- (2) (Look at) What a mess (it is)!
- (3) (Imagine) The impudence!
- (4) (It's a shame) me never having seen her!

At the same time, each type of exclamative has a different function in the hearer-speaker exchange. Whereas the anaphoric type straightforwardly affirms the speaker's judgement, the interrogative type has a more open character, the speaker inviting the hearer to share in their estimation of the degree of X being surprisingly high or low (Michaelis 2001: 1039, Larrory-Wunder 2016). Thus, the second type may be paraphrased by introductory phrases such as *It's amazing, I don't believe, Can you imagine*. The free noun phrase type may be regarded as holding the middle between the speaker-oriented and the hearer-oriented stances of the first two types, since the absence of a verb entails the freedom to interpret the noun phrase either as affirmative (*Such impudence!*) or as an invitation to agree (*What impudence!*). The fourth type displays a similar ambiguity in orientation as the third, with the difference that it focuses on the event rather than on the individual referent.

### 3 DISTRIBUTION OF QU-EXCLAMATIVES IN LATIN

The remainder of this paper will only deal with QU-items. Each language has a different subset of QU-words that may be used in exclamatives. For instance, in English the word *how* can be used in questions and in QU-exclamatives (see above), whereas in French, while *comment?* ‘how?’ can be used in questions and in exclamatives, the adverb *comme* is used in QU-exclamatives, as in *Comme c’est bête!* ‘How stupid that is!’, but not in questions. This has its roots in language history: *comme* was originally used in both these meanings, but it has been ousted in interrogative use by the newer formation *comment* (Moline 2008, Aslanov 2009), which arose from Old French *com* ‘how’ plus the adverbial suffix *-ment*.

The Latin evidence for QU-exclamatives and their functions is summarized in Table 1, on the basis of material provided by Hoff (Hoff 1983: 125–26, whose corpus is limited to Cicero) and Pinkster (2015) and extended by further text searches. Examples in context are given in sections §3.1 through §3.5, which are accompanied by brief etymological discussions in order to facilitate future comparison with exclamatives in other languages, and to provide a backdrop for the discussion of the Latin distribution in §4.

I divide the evidence according to the syntactic function and the semantics of the interrogative markers. Syntactically, I distinguish between adnominal, admodifying (as a cover term for ad-adjectival and ad-adverbial) and adverbial position, since these categories also show different QU-exclamative marking in many other languages. Semantically, QU-exclamatives mark for quality (*what kind?*), quantity (*how many? how often?*), degree (*to what extent?*), and manner (*in what way?*).

#### 3.1 Adjectives of quality

##### *quālis* ‘what kind of’

- (1) *O Romule, Romule die, qualem te patriae custodem di genuerunt!* (Ennius, *Annales* 1.55)  
‘O Romulus, Romulus divine, what a guardian of the fatherland the gods created in you!’ (tr. Goldberg & Manuwald 2018a: 161)
- (2) *quas hominum reddunt facies qualisque colores* (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 6.812)  
‘What do they make men look like, what colours!’ (tr. Rouse 1924: 555)

	interrogative	exclamative	relative	
ADNOMINAL	QUALITY	<i>quālis?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quālis!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quālis</i> (Pl.+)
		<i>quis/quī, -ae, -od?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quī, -ae, -od?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quī, -ae, -od?</i> (Pl.+)
	QUANTITY	<i>quantus?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quantus!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quantus</i> (Pl.+)
		<i>quot?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quot!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quot</i> (Pl.+)
		<i>quid?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quid!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quid</i> (Pl.+)
		—	<i>ut!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>ut</i> (Pl.+)
ADMODIFYING	AD-ADJECTIVAL DEGREE	<i>quam?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quam!</i> (Enn.+)	<i>quam</i> (Pl.+)
		—	<i>quantō!</i> (Cic.+)	<i>quantō</i> (Ter.+)
	AD-ADVERBIAL DEGREE	—	<i>ut!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>ut</i> (Pl.+)
		<i>quam?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quam!</i> (Ter.+)	<i>quam</i> (Pl.+)
ADVERBIAL	MANNER	—	<i>quam!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quam</i> (Pl.+)
		<i>quī?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quī!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quī</i> (Pl.+)
	<i>quemadmodum?</i> (Pl.+)	—	<i>quemadmodum</i> (Pl.+)	
	<i>quōmodo?</i> (Cic.+)	<i>quōmodo!</i> (Sen.+)	<i>quōmodo</i> (Pl.+)	
	QUANTITY	<i>quotiēns?</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quotiēns!</i> (Pl.+)	<i>quotiēns</i> (Pl.+)
		—	—	—

**Table 1** QU-exclamatives in Latin in comparison with the interrogative and relative (also termed ‘indirect questions’, cf. [Bodelot 2005](#)) use of the same words.

- (3) *Qualis nox fuit illa, di deaeque!* (Petronius, *Satyricon* 79.8.1)  
 ‘Ye gods and goddesses, o what a night!’ (tr. Sullivan 1977: 89)

**Etymology:** *quālis* derives from the interrogative stem *\*k<sup>w</sup>o-* in the collective form *\*k<sup>w</sup>eh<sub>2</sub>-* (NOM.ACC.PL.N), to which the adjectival suffix *\*-li-* was added, hence *\*k<sup>w</sup>eh<sub>2</sub>-li-* > *quālis* (de Vaan 2008: 508). The same base, to which adjectival *\*-ko-* was added, is found in Ancient Greek *pēlikos* ‘how big, how old?’ from Proto-Greek *\*k<sup>w</sup>ālikos* (Beekes & van Beek 2010: 1185).

### *quī, quae, quod* ‘which’

- (4) *quas ego hic turbas dabo!* (Plautus, *Bacchides* 357)  
 ‘The havoc I’ll cause!’ (tr. Barsby 1986: 335)
- (5) *Em quibus familiis, quam foedis, quam contaminatis, quam turpibus <de>datis hanc familiam, iudices!* (Cicero, *Pro Scauro* 13)  
 ‘See now, gentlemen! To what families, how foul, how polluted, how degraded you are called upon to surrender the family of Scaurus!’  
 (tr. after Pinkster 2015: 362)
- (6) *Quae cenae, quae deliciae!* (Cicero, *Ad Atticum* 12.2.2)  
 ‘Imagine the parties and fine doings!’ (tr. Bailey 1999: 261 has ‘You can imagine’ [etc.])
- (7) *Qui comitatus in inquirendo! Comitatum dico? Immo vero quantus exercitus! Quae iactura, qui sumptus, quanta largitio!* (Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 13.1)  
 ‘What a company attended him while pursuing his investigations! I say company? Rather what an army! What cost, what expense, what profusion!’

**Etymology:** *quī, quae, quod* represents the interrogative adjective, PIE *\*k<sup>w</sup>o-* ‘which?’, which has largely merged with the interrogative-indefinite pronoun *\*k<sup>w</sup>e-*, *\*k<sup>w</sup>i-* ‘who, what?’ into a single Latin paradigm (Weiss 2020: 370–73) and also serves as the relative pronoun.

## 3.2 Adjectives of quantity

### *quantus* ‘how much, how many’

- (8) *Opsecro, hercle, quantus et quam validus est!* (Plautus, *Amphitruo* 299)  
 ‘Just look at him! How big and strong he is!’ (tr. after Pinkster 2015: 362)

- (9) *Di vostram fidem! quantist sapere!* (Terentius, *Eunuchus* 791)  
 ‘Heaven help us! What it is to be wise!’ (tr. [Barsby 2001b](#): 405)
- (10) *Qui comitatus in inquirendo! Comitatum dico? Immo vero quantus exercitus! Quae iactura, qui sumptus, quanta largitio!* (Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 13.1)  
 See (7) above for the translation.
- (11) *Haec quantis ab illo clamoribus agebantur!* (Cicero, *Pro Sestio* 121.1)  
 ‘What shouts of applause greeted his performance of this passage!’  
 (tr. [Gardner 1958](#): 199)

**Etymology:** *quantus* compares with Umbrian **panta** (NOM.SG.F) ‘how big’ and Oscan *pantes* (GEN.SF.N), pointing to Proto-Italic *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām-to-* ‘of what size’, a derivative with the suffix *\*-to-* from *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām* ‘to which degree’ ([Weiss 2020](#): 313).

**quot ‘how much, how many’**

- (12) *Pro di immortales! quot ego voluptates fero, quot risiones, quot iocos, quot savia, saltationes, blanditias, prothymias!* (Plautus, *Stichus* 657–59)  
 ‘Immortal gods! How many joys I’m carrying, how much laughter, how many jokes, how many kisses, dances, allurements, and acts of kindness!’ (tr. [de Melo 2013](#): 89)
- (13) (...) *is propagatione vitae quot, quantas, quam incredibilis hausit calamitates!* (Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* 1.86)  
 ‘... whilst by the prolongation of life what repeated, bitter draughts of inconceivable disaster he came to drain!’ (tr. [King 1927](#): 103)
- (14) *heu prodiga ingenia, quot modis auximus pretia rerum !* (Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historia* 33.4.1)  
 ‘Alas for the prodigality of our inventiveness! In how many ways have we raised the prices of objects!’ (tr. [Rackham 1952](#): 5)

**Etymology:** *quot* is an uninflected adjective from Proto-Italic *\*k<sup>w</sup>oti* ‘how many’, cognate with Sanskrit *kāti* ‘how many’ and Greek *pósos* ‘how great, how many’ (from *\*k<sup>w</sup>oti* plus *-o-*). The PIE form must be analyzed as an adverb in *\*-ti* based on interrogative *\*k<sup>w</sup>e/o-*.

**quid ‘what amount of, how much’**

- (15) *Tum captivorum quid ducunt secum! Pueros, virgines,| binos, ternos, alius quinque!* (Plautus, *Epidicus* 210–11)

'Then the amount of captives they're bringing along with them! Boys, girls, two each, three each, another one five.' (tr. [de Melo 2011a](#): 355)

- (16) *Di boni, quid turbae est! Aedes nostrae vix capient, scio. Quid comedent! Quid ebibent!* (Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos* 254–5)  
 'Good gods! What a crowd! Our house will barely hold them, I'm sure. How much they'll eat! How much they'll drink!' (tr. [Barsby 2001b](#): 205)

**Etymology:** *quid* (absolute or governing a genitive) is the neuter of interrogative-indefinite 'what', grammaticalized in indefinite usage as 'whatever' ([Weiss 2020](#): 374), e.g., *vel tu me vende vel face quid tibi lubet* 'Either sell me or do whatever you like' (Plautus, *Pers.* 398), *dominus vino quid volet faciet* 'The owner will do whatever he wants with the wine' (Cato, *Agr.* 148.2).

### 3.3 Adverbs of degree with adverbs and adjectives

#### 3.3.1 Ad-adjectival

##### *ut* 'how, as'

- (17) *Sed puer ille quem ego lavi, ut magnust et multum valet!* (Plautus, *Amphitruo* 1103)  
 'But the boy I washed, how big and strong he is!' (tr. [de Melo 2011a](#): 129)
- (18) *ut miserae matres sollicitaeque ex animo sunt crucianturque!* (Plautus, *Truculentus* 448)  
 'How wretched and worried mothers are in their hearts and how they torture themselves!' (tr. [de Melo 2013](#): 315)
- (19) *ut falsus animist!* (Terentius, *Eunuchus* 274)  
 'How mistaken he is!' (tr. [Barsby 2001b](#): 343)
- (20) *ut recondita est!*, see (28) below.

**Etymology:** *ut* probably reflects Proto-Italic *\*k<sup>w</sup>uti* 'how' ([de Vaan 2008](#): 646). The meaning 'how' developed from the local meaning 'where' (cf. [Hackstein 2011](#)), as confirmed by Latin *usquam* 'anywhere' < *\*k<sup>w</sup>ut(V)s* and its cognates, Oscan *puz*, *pus*, Umbrian **puse** 'that; as' from Proto-Sabellic *\*k<sup>w</sup>utVs*. The desiderative adverb *ūtīnam* 'would that', 'if only' (Pl.+ ) derives from *\*k<sup>w</sup>utV* + *\*nām* and may in theory have had any of the five short vowels in the second syllable. A preform *\*k<sup>w</sup>uta* has been reconstructed by [Ernout & Meillet \(1979\)](#) on the strength of Latin *aliuta* 'otherwise' as transmitted by Paulus (*ex Festo* 5,

15) *aliuta antiqui dicebant pro aliter*, and *Si quisquam aliuta faxit* ‘If anyone does otherwise’, but if *-uta* in *aliuta* is really comparable to *ita* ‘thus’, with retained final *-a*, *ut* cannot reflect *\*k<sup>w</sup>uta* unless by irregular loss of the final vowel.

**quam ‘how; than’**

- (21) *Heu quam crudeli condebat membra sepulcro* (Ennius, *Annales* 2.10)  
 ‘Alas! in how cruel a tomb it buried his limbs!’ (Goldberg & Manuwald 2018a: 171)
- (22) *Em quibus familiis quam foedis, quam contaminatis, quam turpibus <de>datis hanc familiam, iudices!* (Cicero, *Pro Scauro* 13)  
 See (5) above for the translation.
- (23) *Quam multa quam paucis (sc. dixisti)!* (Cicero, *Ad Familiares* 11.24.1)  
 ‘How much you have said in how few words!’ (Pinkster 2015: 362)
- (24) *quam hilari voltu semper placatoque ore nos adfatus es!* (Fronto, *Epistula ad Lucium Verum* II.8)  
 ‘With what a cheerful and friendly countenance have you always accosted me!’ (tr. Haines 1920: 241)

**Etymology:** *quam* and its compounds, such as *quande* ‘than’ and *quandō* ‘when’ correspond with Oscan **pam** ‘than’ (< *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām*) and Umbrian **pane**, *pane* ‘when’ (< *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām-de*). Proto-Italic *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām* ‘how’ looks like the accusative singular feminine of the relative pronoun and must be compared to the conjunction *\*k<sup>w</sup>om* > *quom* > *cum* ‘when’, the ACC.SG.M of the same pronoun (Weiss 2020: 373). Similar pairs of adverbialized accusatives are found in *nam* ‘certainly; for’ (< *\*nām*) vs. *num* ‘whether’ (if from *\*nom* and not remade from *\*nu* ‘now’), *tam* ‘so’ vs. *tum* ‘then’, *-dam* ‘some, a certain’ vs. *dum*, *-dum* ‘in the meantime, yet’, and isolated *iam* ‘already’. The adverbs *bi-*, *tri-*, *quadri-fāriam* ‘in two, three, four parts’ are also best explained as accusatives in *\*-ām*, to compound adjectives of the type *\*dwi-f-āsijo-*, the suffix of which was modelled on (ordinals such as) *prīmārius* < *\*-āsijo-* (Weiss 2010: 196).

This suggests that feminine accusatives in *\*-ām* were used as an accusative of respect and became grammaticalized with the meaning ‘as far as, concerning’. The accusative of respect perfectly matches the degree semantics of Latin exclamative *quam*. The feminine gender is surprising but agrees with other feminine-based adverbials, such as Latin *hāc* ‘in this way, thus’ (*\*hād-ke*), *quā* ‘how, inasmuch as’, Oscan *dat*, Umbrian *da-* ‘from’ (*\*dāt*), and Umbrian *nersa* ‘as long as not’ (*\*ne-dām*). They must originally have been governed by a feminine head noun meaning ‘manner’ or ‘way’, or they continue an original

nominative-accusative neuter plural in *\*-ā* which was later reinterpreted as a feminine singular.<sup>1</sup>

### *quantō*

- (25) *Quanto iam levior est adclamatio!* (Cicero, *Pro Rabirio Perduellionis Reo* 18.13)  
 ‘How much diminished is your clamour now!’ (tr. Grose Hodge 1927: 471)
- (26) *heu quanto melior sors tua sorte mea est!* (Ovidius, *Tristia* 5.4.5)  
 ‘Ah, how much better your fate than mine!’ (tr. Kline 2003)

**Etymology:** the ABL.SG of *quantus*, on which see above.

### 3.3.2 *Ad-adverbial*

#### *ut*

- (27) *Ut saepe summa ingenia in occulto latent!* (Plautus, *Captivi* 166)  
 ‘How often the greatest talents lie hidden!’ (tr. Pinkster 2015: 362)
- (28) *Alexandria cunctaque Aegyptus ut occulte latet, ut recondita est, ut furtim tota decemviris traditur!* (Cicero, *De lege agraria* 2.41)  
 ‘What about Alexandria and the whole of Egypt? How secretly it is concealed! how it is kept out of the way! how stealthily it is handed over entirely to the decemvirs!’ (tr. Freese 1930: 415)
- (29) *ut melius, quidquid erit, pati!* (Horatius, *Odes* 1.11.3)  
 ‘How much better to endure whatever it proves to be!’ (tr. Rudd 2004: 45)

<sup>1</sup> Dunkel (Dunkel 1997; Dunkel 2014: I, 137–148) and Hackstein (2017: 3–4) have argued that PIE possessed an instrumental ending *\*-m*, which would be preserved in many adverbial forms of Indo-European languages, including in a number of Latin forms in *-im* with alleged instrumental or ablatival meaning, such as *illim* ‘thence’, *utrimque* ‘on either side’, and in adverbs such as *quam*, *nam* and *clam* ‘secretly’. I remain skeptical about this theory for Indo-European in general (since the ending *\*-m* is also the ACC.SG ending) and for Latin in particular, since many of the Latin forms invoked to support this theory can easily be explained from accusative semantics, e.g., *enim* ‘well! why! to be sure! of course!’, *interim* ‘within the time indicated, meanwhile’, *olim* ‘before the present moment or the time in question, formerly, previously’, *intrinsicus* ‘in the inside, internally’, *utrimque* ‘on both sides’ (all meanings cited according to the OLD). In much-cited *exim* ‘thereafter, thereupon’, the ablatival meaning is caused by *ex*. Altogether the Latin type in *-im* may have started from the ACC.SG pronoun *\*im*.

**quam**

- (30) *quam inique comparatumst!* (Terence, *Phormio* 41)  
'How unfair life is!' (tr. [Barsby 2001a](#): 17)
- (31) *quam lepide se furari putat!* (Cicero, *In Verrem* 2.3.35.10)  
'What an ingenious thief he thinks himself!' (tr. [Greenwood 1935](#): 41), lit. 'How ingeniously he thinks that he is stealing'
- (32) *quam libenter conseruisti sermonem, quam diu produxisti, quam inuitus terminasti!* (Fronto, *Epistula ad Lucium Verum* II.8)  
'How readily engaged in conversation, how long continued it, how reluctantly concluded it!' (tr. [Haines 1920](#): 241)
- (33) *Totus quam bene sic dies abiret!* (Martialis, *Epigrammata* 12.24.11)  
'How nicely would a whole day pass so!' (tr. [Bailey 1983](#): 109)

**quantō**

- (34) *Quanto satius est adire blandis verbis* (Plautus, *Pseudolus* 449)  
'How much better it is to approach him with flattering words' (tr. [de Melo 2012](#): 293)

3.4 *Adverbs of manner with verbs*

**ut**

- (35) *Ut corripuit se repente atque abiit!* (Plautus, *Mercator* 661)  
'How suddenly he hurried off and went away!' ([de Melo 2011b](#): 85)
- (36) *Ut terebrat!* (Plautus, *Bacchides* 1199)  
'How she bores her way through!' (tr. [Barsby 1986](#): 91)
- (37) *o fortuna, ut numquam perpetuo's data* (Terentius, *Hecyra* 406)  
'Oh fortune, how impermanent a gift you are!' (tr. [Barsby 2001a](#): 189)
- (38) *ut tu semper eris derisor!* (Horatius, *Satires* 2.6.54)  
'How you will always mock at us!' (tr. [Rushton Fairclough 1926](#): 215)

**quam**

- (39) *Quam me paenitet!* (Plautus, *Stichus* 307)  
'How I do regret it!' (tr. [Pinkster 2015](#): 362)

- (40) *Ut sapiens habet cor, quam dicit quod opust!* (Plautus, *Persa* 623)  
 ‘What a clever heart she has, how she says what’s necessary!’ (tr. [de Melo 2011b](#): 527)
- (41) *eheu nos miseros, quam totus homuncio nil est!* (Petronius, *Satyrica* 34.10.1)  
 ‘Alas, poor us, how each wretched man is worth nothing!’<sup>2</sup>

***quī* ‘how, whereby; why’ (in curses, + SBJV)**

- (42) *Qui te Juppiter dique omnes, percontator, perduint!* (Plautus, *Menaechmi* 930)  
 ‘May Jupiter and all the gods ruin you, questioner!’ (tr. [de Melo 2011a](#): 523)
- (43) *Qui istum di perdant!* (Plautus, *Trinummus* 923)  
 ‘May the gods ruin him!’ (tr. [de Melo 2013](#): 215)
- (44) *Qui illum di deaeque magno mactassint malo* (Ennius, *Tragedies* fr. 129)  
 ‘Would that the gods and goddesses affect that man with great misfortune!’ (tr. [Goldberg & Manuwald 2018b](#): 133)
- (45) *qui illi di irati!* (Cicero, *Att.* 4,7,1; ellipsis of the copula)  
 ‘May the gods confound him!’ (tr. [Bailey 1999](#): 309)

**Etymology:** *quī* is generally regarded as an original ablative of interrogative *quis, quid*, which, like other forms of this pronoun, mixed with the paradigm of *\*k<sup>w</sup>o-*. Possibly, the ablative continues a PIE instrumental form *\*k<sup>w</sup>iH* ‘with what?’ ([Weiss 2020](#): 373). It introduces main clause curses with a verb in the subjunctive. Its behaviour is more similar to *ut* than to *quam*, and since *ut* derived from earlier ‘where’, it seems likely that *quī* is an older word for ‘how’ than *ut*.

***quōmodo* ‘how’, literally ‘in which way’**

- (46) *Quodsi posset quemadmodum praeteritorum annorum cuiusque numerus proponi, sic futurorum, quomodo illi qui paucos uiderent superesse trepidarent, quomodo illis parcerent!* (Seneca, *Dialogi* 10.8.3.1–4 [On the Shortness of Life])  
 ‘But if each of them could have placed before him the number of his future years, as could happen with his past years, how dismayed

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the translation by [Ernout \(1922: 31\)](#) as ‘Hélas ! pauvre de nous ! que tout le chétif humain n’est rien !’

they would be who saw only a few remaining, how sparing in the way they use them!’ (tr. [Davie 2007](#): 148)

- (47) *iam quomodo ad singula momenta temporum mutabantur animi!*  
(Pseudo-Quintilianus, *Declamationes maiores*, 12.17.8)  
‘At this stage, how our spirits shifted back and forth from one moment to another!’ (tr. [Stramaglia 2021](#): 51)

**Etymology:** *quomodo* is a univerbation of ABL.SG *quō* and *modō*. The historical semantics, phonology and metrical behaviour of this collocation have been described in detail by [Opfermann \(2016: 187–227\)](#), who concludes that *quomodo* had become a single prosodic unit (i.e., word) by the middle or the end of the first century BC.

#### ***quemadmodum* ‘how’**

*Quemadmodum* is a univerbation of ACC.SG *quem* ‘which’, the preposition *ad* ‘by’ and the accusative *modum* ‘way’. It is not attested with exclamative semantics.

### 3.5 Adverbs of frequency

#### ***quotiens* ‘how many times’**

- (48) *Quotiens monstraui tibi uiro ut morem geras* (Plautus, *Menaechmi* 787)  
‘How often did I teach you to obey your husband!’ (tr. [de Melo 2011a](#): 507)
- (49) *Quotiens ego hunc Archiam vidi, iudices . . . , quotiens ego hunc vidi!*  
(Cicero, *Pro Archia* 18)  
‘How often, gentlemen, have I seen my friend Archias ... how often, I say, have I seen him!’ (tr. [Watts 1923](#): 27)
- (50) *Quotiens iam tibi extorta est ista sica de manibus!* (Cicero, *In Catilinam* 1.16)  
‘How many times your dagger has already been wrenched from your grasp!’ ([Pinkster 2015](#): 362 translates ‘Think of all the times when ...’)

**Etymology:** *quotiens* represents PIE *\*k<sup>w</sup>oti* ‘how many’ plus the suffix *\*-nt-* (NOM.SG *\*-nts* > Latin *\*-ents* > *-ēns*) which indicates measures ([Weiss 2020](#): 393).

## 4 GAPS IN THE DISTRIBUTION

Table 1 reveals a number of distributional gaps which may yield information on the meaning and development of the words in question.

### 4.1 *Quōmodo, quemadmodum*

As is to be expected on the basis of their source word *modus* ‘way, manner’, the univerbations *quōmodo* and *quemadmodum* have manner-related semantics. This explains their absence from degree constructions.

*Quōmodo!* is not attested in Republican Latin, in spite of the occurrence of the word in relatives from Plautus on. *Quemadmodum!* is absent from our texts altogether, in spite of the occurrence of *quemadmodum* from Plautus onwards in relatives and interrogatives. This situation can be explained from the inner-Latin origin of these two univerbations: in Old Latin, the slot for exclamative ‘how!’ was already occupied by *ut!* and *quam!*, whereas *quōmodo* and *quemadmodum* had not yet succeeded in entering this function; compare Modern French exclamative *comme!* which has stood its ground against the more recent interrogative and relative comment ‘how’.

The complete absence of *quemadmodum!* versus the use of *quōmodo!* from the first century AD onwards is tentatively explained by Aslanov (2009: 23) from a difference in register: *quemadmodum* would belong to a higher, more formal register, whereas *quōmodo* would be more colloquial. Its colloquial status is supported by its further reduction to *como*, found in curse tablets from the first and second century AD onwards (Opfermann 2016: 222). The chronology of attestations for *quōmodo*, where relative usage is attested earlier than the interrogative and exclamative uses, might be taken to support the view that exclamatives follow relatives (compare §2.5).

### 4.2 *Quantō*

The absence of interrogative *quantō?* ‘how much ...-er?’ may be due to chance. Exclamative *quantō!* is attested earlier with comparative adverbs such as *melius* (Pl.+), than with comparative adjectives (Cic.+), but since correlative *tantō* is found with comparatives such as *melior* and *miserior* in Plautus, this may just be a coincidence.

### 4.3 *Ut*

The absence of interrogative *ut?* ‘how?’ from degree constructions of the type ‘How big? How soon?’ (as opposed to its presence in manner constructions)

may be significant. In the corresponding exclamatives, ad-adjectival *ut!* is always found with *esse*, where it may alternatively be analyzed as a manner expression. We may hypothesize that *ut* was originally excluded from degree expressions and only had manner semantics, ‘in which way’.

#### 4.4 *Quam*

The absence of interrogative *quam* from manner constructions versus its presence in degree constructions (for which see [Bodelot 2011](#))<sup>3</sup> may also be significant: in interrogative main clauses, we find only *quam* in degree constructions and only *ut* in manner constructions. The motivation for this distribution may lie in their original semantics, with *quam* inquiring after degree (‘To what extent?’) and *ut* inquiring after manner (‘In which way?’), like *quī* and *quemadmodum*. Note that this distribution of *quam* and *ut* would be etymologically identical to the distinction between the Indo-Iranian pejorative compounds in *ka-* and *ku-* as proposed in §2.2: we may identify *ka-* with *quam!* and *ku-* with *ut!* The type in *ka-* may then literally have meant ‘to what extent’, e.g., Skt. *ka-pūya-* ‘To what extent stinking!’ (> ‘stinking awfully’), versus *ku-* ‘in what way’, e.g., Skt. *kú-yava-* ‘in what way [is it] a crop!’ (> ‘bringing crop failure’).

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have discussed several typological and diachronic questions regarding the historical development of exclamatives, with a focus on those found in Latin. Four of the most frequent constructions found in Indo-European languages to form exclamatives are anaphoric marking, interrogative marking (also termed QU-exclamatives), free noun phrases, and free subordinators. The interrogative markers of Latin can be divided into adnominals marking for quality (*quālis*, *quī*) and quantity (*quantus*, *quot*, *quid*), admodifiers marking for degree (*quam*, *quantō*, *ut*), and adverbials marking for manner (*ut*, *quam*, *quī*, *quōmodo*) and quantity (*quotiēns*).

Exclamative *ut!* and *quam!* show traces of a complementary distribution, because *ut!* is mainly used with manner-related semantics and *quam!* mainly with degree-related semantics, while *quam?* is absent from manner-related questions. These distinctions may be due to the original meaning of the two

<sup>3</sup> As an interrogative header, *quam* is more frequent before adverbs (e.g., *Quam mox?* ‘How soon?’) than before adjectives. Two examples of the latter are Cicero, *Pro Fonteio* 4.2: *quam multorum hominum?* ‘And how many persons were concerned?’ (tr. [Watts 1931](#): 313); Juvenal, *Satires* 3.143: *quam multa magnaue paropside cenat?* ‘How many and how lavish are his courses at dinner?’ (tr. [Braund 2004](#): 179).

words, with *\*k<sup>w</sup>ām* ‘to what extent, to which degree?’ versus the originally locative adverb *\*k<sup>w</sup>uti* ‘where?’ → ‘how, in what way?’.

The absence of *quī*, *quōmodo*, and *quemadmodum* from degree-evaluating expressions is explained by their exclusively manner-related meaning ‘how’.

The syntagms *quōmodo* and *quemadmodum* were not yet used in exclamatives in Republican Latin. *Quōmodo!* first appears in the first century AD and *quemadmodum* remains unused in exclamatives. Thus, like in French *comme* versus *comment*, Latin shows that the lexical renewal of interrogative ‘how?’ drives the replacement of the degree-evaluating QU-exclamatives.

Etymologically, the three oldest admodifying and adverbial QU-exclamatives are *quī*, *ut*, and *quam*, which may all have started from a different function: instrumental for *quī*, locative for *ut*, and accusative (of respect) for *quam*. It is therefore impossible to posit a chronological hierarchy between these words, though of course they may have acquired exclamative meaning at different points in time.

Methodologically, the three-way distinction adopted here between adnominal, admodifying, and adverbial interrogative markers has proven to be a useful framework for the investigation of QU-exclamatives. This approach can now be tested on other languages and on other categories of exclamative markers.

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